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Evaluation of the effectiveness of a job coordinator in reducing recidivism at the State Training School

Sharon L. Caldwell
University of Northern Iowa

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Evaluation of the effectiveness of a job coordinator in reducing recidivism at the State Training School

Abstract

The State Training School in Eldora, Iowa, is where Iowa Juvenile Courts send their male adjudicated "delinquent" youths. There are five regular cottage units, a reception-diagnostic cottage unit and four specialized living units. The operating capacity is 238 and the average daily population for 1984 was 213 males between 13 and 17 years of age. There are two on-going programs for the students -- clinical and educational.

EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A JOB COORDINATOR IN REDUCING
RECIDIVISM AT THE STATE TRAINING SCHOOL

A Research Paper

Presented to

The Department of Educational Administration
and Counseling

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In Partial Fulfillment

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Master of Arts In Education

by

Sharon L. Caldwell

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IN REDUCING RECIDIVISM AT THE STATE TRAINING SCHOOL

has been approved as meeting the research paper requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

Robert T. Lembke

10/23/85
Date Approved

Advisor/Director of Research Paper

Robert Krajewski

10/24/85
Date Approved

Second Reader of Research Paper

Robert Krajewski

10/24/85
Date Received

Head, Department of Educational
Administration and Counseling

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

The State Training School in Eldora, Iowa, is where Iowa Juvenile Courts send their male adjudicated "delinquent" youths. There are five regular cottage units, a reception-diagnostic cottage unit and four specialized living units. The operating capacity is 238 and the average daily population for 1984 was 213 males between 13 and 17 years of age. There are two on-going programs for the students--clinical and educational.

Clinical Program

The clinical program combines two functions generally found in separate programs in more traditional institutions: social services and cottage life, thus eliminating the gulf between so-called treatment services and custodial services. A student's institutional life centers in a cottage where the cottage staff team (clinical and educational personnel) work together to identify his problems, develop a program with specific goals for his accomplishment and evaluate his progress. In this endeavor the team will draw upon the services of other programs--religion, psychology, medicine, psychiatry--as appropriate.

Educational Program

The second major program for the students is the education program--academic and vocational. There are three main areas of instruction: self-contained classroom, modified self-contained and departmentalized instruction.

The academic program's major objective is to prepare students academically, socially and emotionally for re-entry into the public school system. A student-teacher ratio of 10:1 enables individualization of instruction which is imperative due to the wide range of student abilities and needs. The students average two to four years academic retardation and many have severe reading disabilities (4% cannot read at all; 8% read at 3rd grade level; another 8% cannot read above 4th grade level at time of admission).

The objectives of the vocational program are to train a student in the basics of one of 16 vocational areas (which are competency-based); to teach good work habits; and through teacher's example and relationship to contribute to a student's self-awareness, self-confidence, and improving sense of values. Two additional components of this program include a job-seeking and survival skills class and a community-based vocational training program where students are placed in the local community to receive on-the-job training. All vocational students are required to take the job-seeking and survival

skills class while participants for the on-the-job training program are selected according to the student's progress and training needs.

In addition to classroom instruction, the educational program offers the following services to all students, vocational as well as academic:

1. Remedial Reading and Mathematics
2. Comprehensive Arts
3. Library
4. Achievement and Aptitude Testing
5. Vocational Exploration.

A typical day's schedule would include: 6:30 a.m. wake up and breakfast; 8:00 a.m.-12:00 school; 12:00-1:00 p.m. lunch; 1:00-2:30 p.m. school; 2:30-4:30 p.m. cottage small groups and individual counseling; 4:30-5:30 p.m. supper; 5:30-7:30 p.m. leisure time activities; 7:30-10:00 p.m. cottage; 10:00 p.m. bed. The average length of stay is seven months, with periodic trial home visits on weekends.

The institution has hosted many visitors from state agencies and area schools as well as interested persons from across the nation. Many have requested consultation services while others request any/all materials possible. The system is sound and rather comprehensive. As a matter of fact, the Training School was honored on February 22, 1985, at

Indianapolis, Indiana, when the Commission on Accreditation For Corrections presented the Superintendent with a very impressive certificate with the following citation, "In recognition of the attainment of excellence in the operation of a Juvenile Training School". However, there must be a missing component somewhere in the system since the recidivism rate remains high (approximately 35% for 1984).

The structure of the institution demands appropriate behavior from the students or their stays are extended. Within a month's time, most students know what is expected and so abide by those rules for the duration of their stay. They can gain much (education, personal values, self-esteem, working through problems, etc.) all within the institutional structure. Then comes placement or discharge--no more structure or staff who have provided the little extra support--the day that each anxiously awaits! What lies ahead? It's the real world. . . the only structure being the laws which they previously defied and the only support perhaps a family member who doesn't have a history of being too reliable. It's now time for this "16 year old going on 30" who succeeded in playing the institutional game to go out into this new arena with unestablished rules, except those of survival and those set by the institutional process. His placement/

probation condition(s) will probably include re-entry to school, employment, and/or GED classes.

Is this possibly the step where the system fails? Within the institution everything is highly structured; outside is "freedom". Freedom they all await, but yet a freedom that might be too large for them to cope with successfully. Is it the mismanagement of this freedom that causes recidivism? Is there a need for a linkage between the institution and this freedom--a person that will at least get them started in a positive manner? Perhaps it may be assistance in seeking a job, arranging necessary education, finding a place to live, helping with purchase of a car, or maybe just knowing someone is there if needed. Is it basically the building of a structure acceptable to both him and society?

Are the students more aware of this missing link than the professional staff? Mike, a student who returned to the Training School, made the following remarks during his second entrance interview. At the time of the Training School release, Mike believed that he was prepared for his return to the community and that he could be successful and avoid problems with the law. In reflection, he contended that a job would have made the difference between success and failure in the community and he believed that if he had a job he would not have returned to the Training School. He pointed out that

he stayed out of trouble for nearly six months, and then the need for money resulted in his decision to a "breaking and entering". When asked what changes the Training School should make to better assist boys prior to their release, Mike responded that there should be a job for the boys when they return to the community. He pointed out that the only time that he had "done crime" was for the money.

The study was an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of a coordinator providing assistance to students upon placement from the institution. A coordinator was to provide 90-day assistance to all vocational students placed in a predetermined four-county area. A descriptive survey was done at three month, six month, and one year intervals to look at what percent were again institutionalized and what percent were employed. The same survey was sent to a similar group (age, demographic location, and family background) that did not receive assistance from a coordinator. The two groups' data were compared in relation to the rate of recidivism for each group.

Statement of Problem

The major focus of the study was to examine the effectiveness of a job coordinator assisting students upon placement from the institution and reducing recidivism.

Research Questions

This study addressed itself to the following questions:

1. Of the students receiving assistance, what percent are/were institutionalized a second time?
2. Of the students not receiving assistance, what percent are/were institutionalized a second time?
3. What percent of both groups are/were employed?

Significance of the Study

The recidivism rate continues to be high regardless of the additional services provided for the students at the institution. Perhaps with a linkage between the institution and the community placement site, more students will not again be institutionalized.

The study attempted to provide evidence regarding the effectiveness of a job coordinator reducing recidivism. More specifically, the study was of practical significance to the institution as the results could indicate whether or not there is a need to employ additional coordinators so that all students being placed within the State of Iowa can be served.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited in the generalizability due to the small sample of students and geographic area; for example, neither minority groups or groups from large metropolitan areas were represented. Random sampling for the experimental

group was not possible since it was necessary to serve students located in a predetermined area. However, the comparison group was matched as closely as possible regarding geographic area, age, family structure, etc.

While the items on the questionnaire were structured and very simple to answer, it was expected the rate of return could be low due to the type of population in the study.

No attempt was made to control a variety of factors which could contribute to success or return to the institution, parental marital status, loss of significant family members, such as parole stipulations, environment, relocation, etc. However, if counseling or any other help was accepted by the student/family in any such situation, arrangements were made.

Definition of Terms

Job Coordinator. A staff person from the State Training School who provided assistance to students upon placement from the institution.

Assistance. This is a term used to refer to the aid that was given to a student which was determined by the student as to his future plans. The assistance could be employment, school arrangements, military enlistment, housing, etc.

Institutionalized. This refers to a student who had been put into an institution.

Placement. This refers to a student being released from the institution.

Recidivism. This term refers to the return to crime or anti-social behavior pattern by a student.

Employed. The term according to this study refers to being paid minimum wage for work provided on a full or part-time basis.

Chapter Two

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The reasons for students returning to crime have long been issues concerning those working with juvenile delinquents. These reasons are of utmost importance to the job coordinator so as to better understand the full spectrum of a delinquent and his possible future behavior. Many juvenile delinquents sent off to institutions simply become further alienated, hostile and hardened in criminal culture and upon release many accept society's unqualified label "bad." Related to this thought is a theoretical question posed by Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1978): "Does self-esteem cause delinquency or delinquency self-esteem?" They summarized their findings as follows:

The deviant individual, taking the role of the other, sees himself through the eyes of particular others or from the perspective of the generalized other.

He tends not only to internalize the negative attitudes of particular other people toward the self but also, feeling that he violates the basic values of the society, comes to share society's negative attitudes toward himself (i.e., to develop low self-esteem (p. 21).

Faced with increasing conflicts between the roles demanded of them at home, parole conditions, and in the peer group, many delinquents find their self-esteem severely strained. Kaplan (1975) suggested that a build up of negative feelings in teenagers brought about by continued failure to meet the standards expected of them in their dominant membership groups impels them to seek the company of teenage groups where standards are rejected and delinquent behavior is admired. By endorsing delinquent values and living up to them through the commission of delinquent acts, the teenager gains the status that is denied in other settings, and consequently self-esteem is restored.

Keeping students in school rather than dropping-out has been a key factor in delinquency. As described in the introduction, many of the students perform at an extremely low level. Perhaps schools need to place more emphasis in reaching these lower achievers. The Dobransky (1976) "Operation Stay-In" study supported this thought. Its purpose was to reduce the number of dropouts from a Cleveland, Ohio, High School and also help those who withdrew maintain full-time employment. The results indicated a significant difference in the number of students who received various work-study guidance options that remained in school. However,

there was no significant difference in the proportion of dropouts who maintained full-time employment.

This brings up the big issue of employment. The significance of employment for adult offenders has received much attention with less found on youthful offenders. A considerable amount of data appears to substantiate each divergent view of the significance of employment. Advocates stress the positive social effects of economic well-being pointing out that providing employment opportunities gives people the means of escaping from the anti-social consequences of poverty. Employment allows them legitimate means of obtaining goods and status.

Morton (1959) and other sociologists (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960) reflect the lack of legitimate means and opportunities to achieve the product of success--i.e., affluence and status--goals which are assumed to be commonly shared by all Americans. They assume that those who lack the legitimate means of obtaining such goals will turn/return to anti-social behavior.

Custer (1981) stated that employment at parole discharge was the highest correlate with parole success. Those parolees who were employed were disproportionately more successful in their parole performance, both in terms of violations and revocations. The results of a study performed by Whitney

(1975) indicated that participation in business seems to have its major effect in reducing the occurrence of arrest. The success was largely due to inducing socially acceptable behavior in its participants through experience and structured vocational training.

In 1957 the New York City Youth Board awarded funds to Federation Employment and Guidance Service (FEGS) for a special project to give vocational adjustment services to youngsters on the premise that "the establishment of constructive habits of work would channel energies frequently misspent in destructive habits of gang activity and delinquent behavior" (Henry, 1958, p. 18). Many of the young workers had never had pocket money. Now they earned ten dollars a week. Many opened their first bank accounts; others gave money to their mothers or bought clothes for the coming school year. Fifteen volunteered money from their salaries to enable the project to take on more youngsters. Not one participant got into trouble. Not one quit out of dissatisfaction. All displayed fine, eager attitudes toward their jobs. Warren Henry, director of the FEGS project, said the experience gave them "a sense of purpose and achievement. . . . They could see the difference their work made. . . ." One of the boys said "It's nice to feel useful to somebody" (Henry, 1958, p. 19).

Frank Manella (1960) directed a similar program in Cincinnati and summarized:

Our objective in finding jobs was not only the desire for youth to make money. More important was the total effect of this employment in the development of attitudes and values resulting in good work habits and a better understanding of the employer-employee relationships. . . . Although we could not prove conclusively by research that youth employment was a preventive of delinquency, we felt strongly that it served this purpose (p. 167).

There is a world-wide hunch that juvenile crime decreases during the times of unemployment. A study by Bogen (1944) found a decline in boys' delinquency rates which coincided with a decline in business activity from 1925 to 1941. However, the findings were confounded by a simultaneous rise in the role of social and welfare agencies (such as CCC camps, etc.).

One study of juvenile crime by census tract (Porterfield, 1948) found that social disorganization, rather than economic well-being or lack of it, was related to the juvenile crime rate. Landers (1962) proposed that delinquency rates were the results of normlessness. Although conditions of poverty often

occur side by side with neighborhood instability and the resulting lack of norms, the delinquency rate, Landers proposed, was not related to the economics of an area, but to its moral character.

Proponents of early employment for delinquents support the findings that employment provides opportunities for learning, opportunities for initiative and autonomy and opportunities for social interaction. All jobs share some features in common (e.g., demands for punctuality) which may affect adolescents' development in important ways. However, others argue it is employability, not employment, that should be stressed. Again referring to the Custer (1981) study, it was also concluded that preparation for employment appeared to be the most effective form of treatment for juvenile delinquents. It was postulated that the earlier the work experience takes place the more effective it will be. Hoyt (1978) included the following as abilities of truly employable students: ". . . good work habits; job-seeking, job-getting and job-holding abilities; discovering and using unpaid work as a productive way of spending leisure time; the skills needed to humanize the workplace for themselves. . . ." (p. 30).

Even without scientific evidence that jobs prevent or "cure" delinquency, it is possible to agree with a Ventura

parole officer (Ertel, 1957) who said that vocational efforts for delinquent youngsters have. . .

an important place. . . a real value While some of them have such deep-seated problems that they are unable to use the help immediately, it is not necessarily lost and does help them in securing a job when they are more stabilized. With some youngsters a job is an important stabilizing influence and is the first step in producing a change in attitude and behavior (p. 7).

While much of the research has yielded favorable results regarding employment and the return to crime by juveniles, others have found that the family structure and their employability also have a marked relationship of the juveniles' vocational maturity. Follow-up studies (Robins, 1966) have indicated that many adjudicated delinquents in later life have had severe occupational adjustment problems, especially those from broken homes. Woodbury (1974) pointed out that delinquents with divorced parents do possess less knowledge about careers and about their characteristics and requirements than do delinquents whose parents have remained married.

An employment research project conducted by the Pennsylvania Prison Society (1980) concluded that the linkage

between employment and crime is best demonstrated on a macro level. Programs which simply aim to provide jobs for ex-offenders will have negligible impact on criminal behavior. The study further contends that familial responsibility is strongly related to employment success.

Job coordinators must look at all these different variables which may produce recidivism or success. They must be aware of the different factors which could lead to reoccurrence of crime. Through this awareness they will be prepared to take preventative steps in many instances. After one has a grasp of these factors, there is still another area to be dealt with, that being the community itself where the delinquent will be placed. Community planners, organizers and job coordinators trying to develop a broader range of service programs for delinquents through community-based services face deeply ingrained stereotyping. Here, where we should discriminate, we don't. We incorrectly label all deviants "bad." In a study done by Scholass and Scholass (1982) statistically significant differences were obtained in managers' plans for work skill development when comparing job applicants labeled normal and behavior disordered.

Rosenblum (1960) concluded that chances to feel useful are rare for youngsters with court records or anti-social problems. They rarely get an opportunity to feel productive

on a job because too many employers automatically turn away at the first sign of a police record. Hannum (1960) suggested that perhaps some parole officers are reluctant to have faith in their product because their profession deals with sin, the devil, and the dungeon. Some even conclude that it is unethical not to advertise the sinner as such, and permanently. Innumerable letters have been written and phone calls made to business firms to find out whether they would be willing to hire "a problem boy" or "a juvenile delinquent." Many of these communications have omitted any statement of values whatsoever, or have deliberately de-emphasized good or fairly good skills. The proponent has not prepared himself to know anything about the capacities required to make the employer's products; his approach is simply one of urging or begging the employer to participate in a nebulous adventure too often called "rehabilitation." The parole officer has ignored the real values, the very foundation of security-through-production, of the human being who, almost invariably, has something of value to offer.

It takes common sense, good interviewing ability, facts, and the use of a reasonable amount of patience, understanding, time and effort to determine these values. A competent coordinator has experienced the satisfaction that comes from putting a client at ease, helping him clarify his own skills,

estimating them accurately, and then helping him to prepare for a satisfactory interview. The ability to assist a client with decisions related to his occupational choice can often provide a platform on which to build or relate the other important aspects of a healthy relationship.

The coordinator must also be knowledgeable of all services available in each community. One is not capable of dealing with the problem alone and requires assistance of the business community, churches, governmental agencies, and professional groups and organizations. As Coughlin (1977) stated, "If the offender is to be successfully reintegrated, the community cannot abdicate responsibility or withhold resources" (p. 299). He also pointed out that not everyone who is "returned to the community" is going to provide a success story, so professionals must avoid building up unrealistic expectations. The collapse of such expectations only widens the credibility gap between professionals and community.

There are risks in all programs of treatment for law offenders. The only way to totally eliminate recidivism and risk is either to put to death all law violators or put them away for life. Since society is not going to do that, it makes sense to individualize the approach to delinquency and this implies community-based services.

Chapter Three

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Subjects

The subjects in this study included thirty-two white male students. All subjects had been institutionalized at the State Training School and all had been in the vocational education program. Sixteen of the students received assistance from a job coordinator and sixteen students received no assistance. The mean age of the students was 16.7 years.

Procedures

During the student's last week of stay at the institution the job coordinator met with him for an exit interview. At this time a permanent address, telephone number, placement site, exit date and length of stay were obtained. Also, an explanation of the study and what would be done with the results were given to the student. Stress was made that names would not be used in any part of the study and the student signed agreeing to freely participate in the study.

Three months later an introductory letter advising him that the survey would be coming in two weeks was mailed. This step was included to insure a better rate of response and to verify the address.

Two weeks after the introductory letter, the three-month survey, a cover letter and self-addressed and stamped envelope were sent. The cover letter again explained the purpose of the survey, what would be done with the results and mentioned confidentiality.

If a student did not respond within two weeks, a telephone call was made reminding him of the survey. At this time he could respond to the survey over the telephone or the interviewer found out what the reason was for not responding. If the study had been institutionalized again it was so recorded.

This same procedure was followed for the six-month and one-year surveys, too. The introductory and cover letters were revised somewhat to keep interest and show appreciation for their assistance.

Source of Data

A descriptive survey was developed to obtain the necessary data to calculate the percent of students again institutionalized and those employed. The survey was structured and contained short, simple questions. A copy of the survey is included in the appendix.

Methods of Collection

As stated in the procedure section, use was made of an exit interview, introductory letter, cover letter, and a

survey all of which can be found in the appendix. The surveys for the sixteen-member group that received assistance was printed on blue paper while the surveys of the unassisted group of sixteen was printed on white paper. If a survey was not returned within two weeks, a telephone call was made to obtain the information. Contact was also made with a student's field social worker if his location was unknown.

Chapter Four

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The purpose of this research was to provide evidence regarding the effectiveness of a job coordinator in reducing recidivism at the State Training School. This chapter contains the data obtained from the surveys sent at three-month, six-month and one-year intervals to sixteen students who received assistance from a job coordinator and to sixteen students who received no assistance.

After the first three months the group with assistance had 68% employed and no one unemployed while the unassisted group had 38% employed and 6% unemployed. Both groups had students in post-secondary training--assisted group 13% and unassisted group 6%. The assisted group also had 13% enrolled in General Education Development (GED) programs. Institutionalization was also found in both groups with 6% from the assisted group and 50% from the unassisted group (See Figures 1 and 2).

From the six-month data (Figure 3) the assisted group reported employment at 25% and unemployment at 12%. Students who had been enrolled in the GED program dropped out and had not yet found jobs. The 25% unknown were students who had been employed in a community that was not near their home and had also turned eighteen years of age and, therefore, were no

Figure 1
Three-Month Data of Group With Assistance

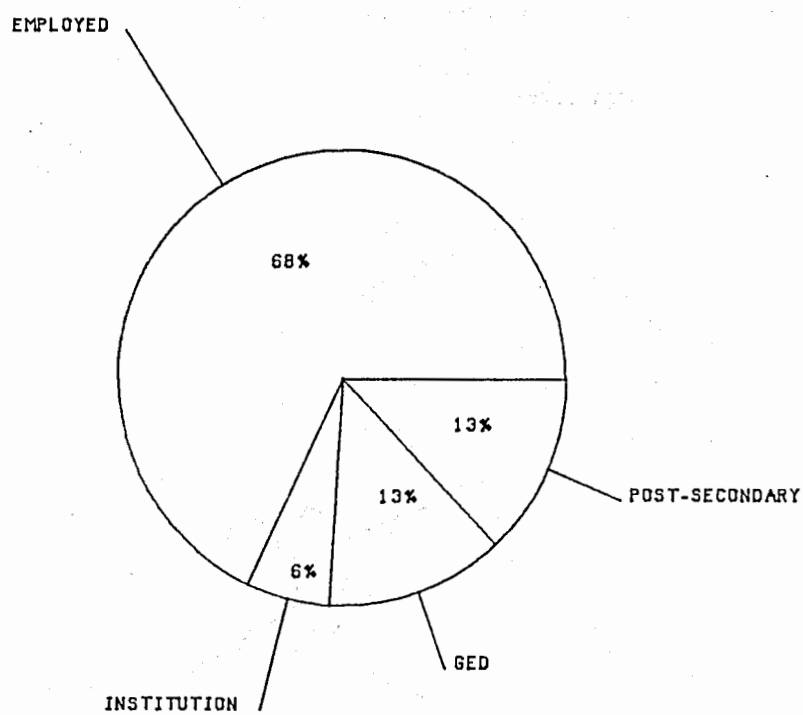


Figure 2

Three-Month Data of Group Without Assistance

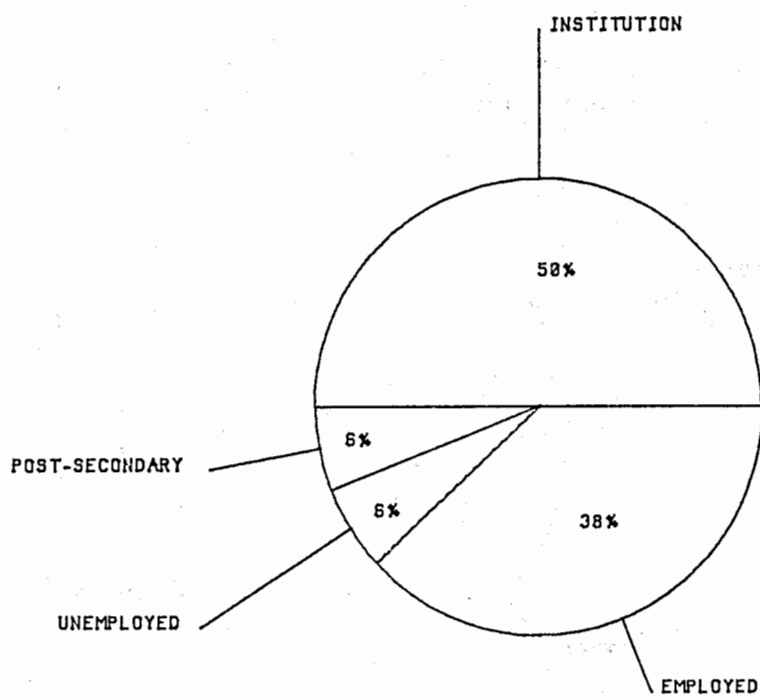
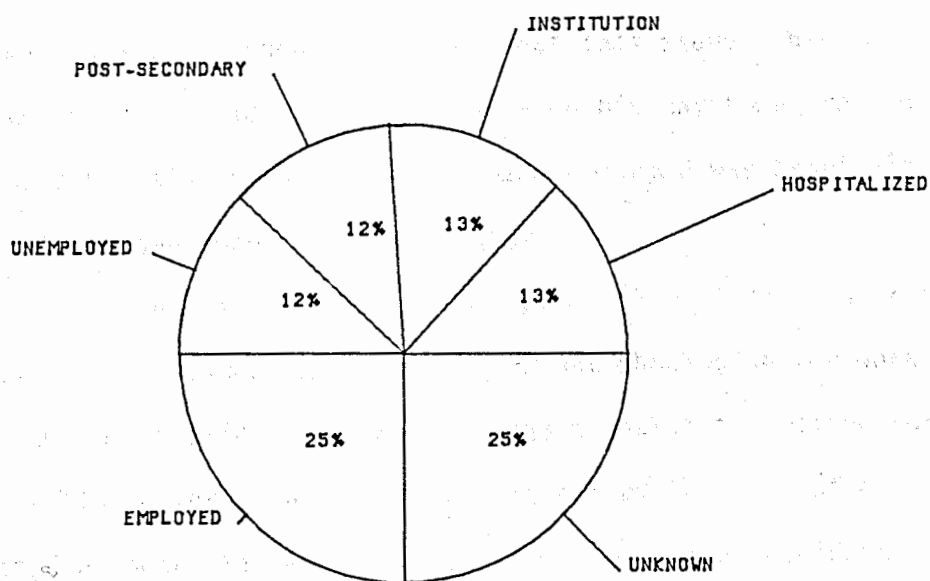


Figure 3
Six-Month Data of Group With Assistance



longer under jurisdiction of the state. The letters and surveys were returned unopened and the students could not be located by telephone nor did the field social workers know of their whereabouts. Institutionalization increased with a previously employed student who had gotten in trouble after working hours. Post-secondary training remained the same. It was learned that two students were involved in a motorcycle accident; one was severely injured and fortunately therapy, a concerned sister, will-power and time are seeing him through the ordeal. It should be noted that this student had been employed full-time but was injured on his way home from work. The other student who had also been employed was hospitalized and released about two weeks later.

The unassisted group's employment (Figure 4) also dropped due to one student being fired for not showing up for work on numerous occasions, another was again institutionalized for stealing a car, and yet another report of bad news of a student being killed in a motor-vehicle-related accident. The post-secondary figure remained the same.

The one year data (Figure 5) showed a large increase in the percentage of students institutionalized from the assisted group. A student who previously had been reported unknown was located at Anamosa State Prison. One of the students who had

Figure 4

Six-Month Data of Group Without Assistance

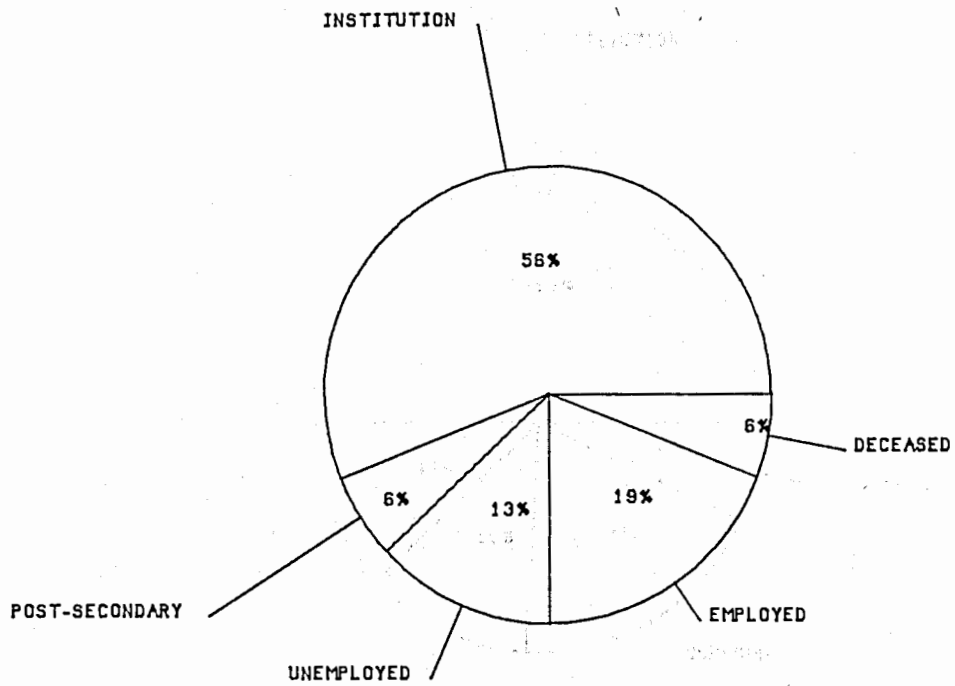
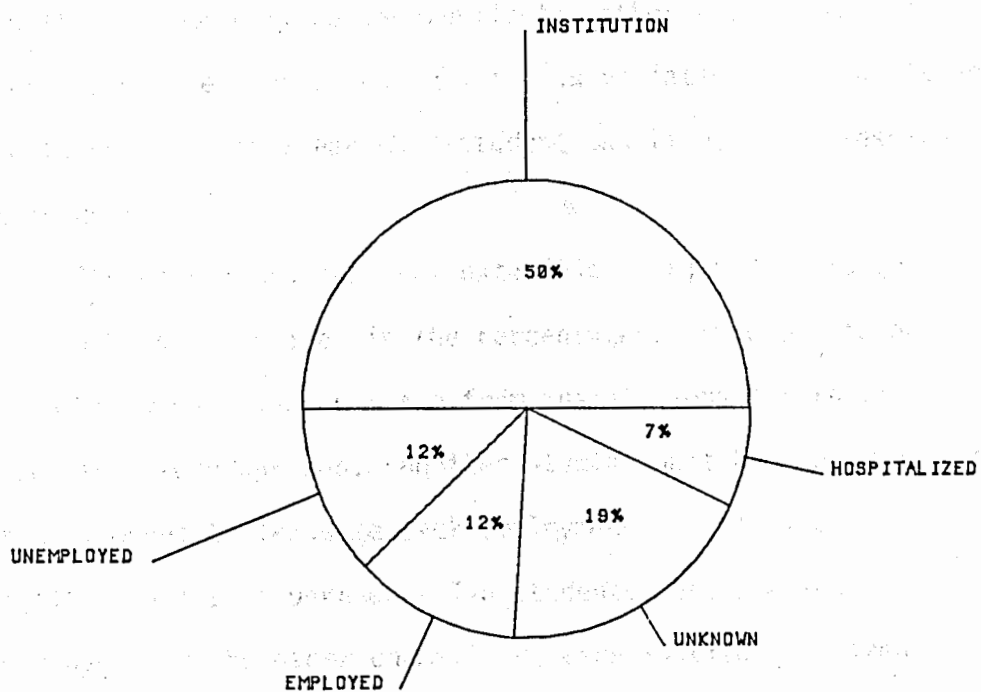


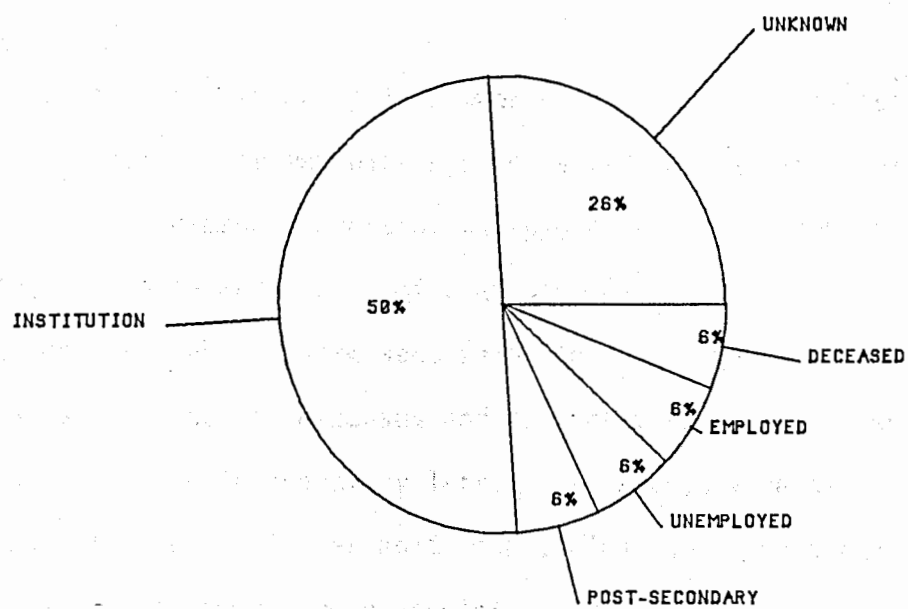
Figure 5
One-Year Data of Group With Assistance



been involved in the motorcycle accident did not cope well after the incident and was continually in trouble and he, too, ended up at Anamosa. Two students who had been employed for nine months and had good work records and one unemployed student were incarcerated for drug dealing. The two students who had been in post-secondary training at a community college parted ways. One gained employment in an auto body shop for which he had been trained at the State Training School as well as at the community college while the other student was not as fortunate. He dropped out due to law violations and was later sentenced. Another employed student was fired for excessive tardiness.

The unassisted one-year data (Figure 6) had no large increases or decreases in the percentages. However, three students were released again from institutions but their locations were unknown. Another student quit his job when his family moved to Texas to seek employment and his exact location was also unknown. Two students, one previously employed and the other unemployed, were institutionalized again. The student enrolled in a two-year post-secondary training program was still attending classes and doing well.

Figure 6
One-Year Data of Group Without Assistance



Chapter Five

SUMMARY

Brief Description of the Problem

This study attempted to investigate the effectiveness of a job coordinator reducing the rate of recidivism at the State Training School. The study was also of practical significance to the institution as the results could indicate whether or not there is a need to employ additional coordinators so that all students being placed within the State of Iowa can be served.

Methodology

During the student's last week of stay at the institution the job coordinator met with him for an exit interview. At this time a permanent address, telephone number, placement site, exit date and length of stay were obtained.

Introductory letters were sent prior to the surveys in hopes of a better rate of responses and to verify addresses. Two weeks after the introductory letter the surveys were sent along with a cover letter again explaining the study and a self-addressed and stamped envelope.

If a student did not respond within two weeks, a telephone call was made reminding him of the survey and/or obtain the information. Contact was also made with a student's field social worker if his location was unknown.

The surveys were sent to thirty-two white male students all of which had been institutionalized at the State Training School. The sixteen students who had received assistance from a job coordinator for 90 days responded to surveys printed on blue paper while the sixteen students that did not receive any assistance were sent surveys printed on white paper.

Findings

Research results for this study were obtained from descriptive surveys sent to the thirty-two male participants. Percentages were calculated for each group at the three different time intervals and shown graphically on pie charts to aid in answering the research questions.

1. Of the students receiving assistance, what percent are/were institutionalized a second time? Results were 6% at three months, 13% at six months, and 50% at one year.
2. Of the students not receiving assistance, what percent are/were institutionalized a second time? Results were 50% at three months, 56% at six months, and 50% at one year.
3. What percent of both groups are/were employed? The group with assistance had 68% employed at three months, 25% employed at six months and 12% employed at one year. The groups without assistance had 38%

employed at three months, 19% employed at six months and 6% employed at one year.

Results indicated significant differences between the groups at the end of the first three-month interval. This is the time sixteen students were given assistance by the job coordinator for 90 days and the results were much more positive with more employed or in school/college programs rather than being institutionalized. The group without assistance had a much greater recidivism and unemployment rate.

The job coordinator's assistance to the sixteen students ended after three months and the six-month and one-year percentages indicated a continued increase in unemployment and institutionalization for the group. The one-year data yielded much similarity rather than much difference between the groups, especially with the 50% recidivism rate for both groups.

Many employers indicated the students were very hard workers and were trustworthy. One boss felt like the student was his body guard; the student did not like it if co-workers or customers gave the boss any difficulty. The employer explained the differences were part of the job and not always directed personally at him but rather at the position itself. Employers were often disappointed when they learned of a

student being in trouble with the law and felt badly when they had no other alternative but to fire the student. Those employers who fired students because of tardiness or absenteeism frequently indicated the student was a good worker but lacked dependability.

Conclusions

The job coordinator did reduce the rate of recidivism while the service was provided. The coordinator was the student's very own "knight in shining armor." When the freedom they long awaited made them confused or afraid and they had no dependable person to turn to, they knew the coordinator was only a telephone call away. Many times it was only a matter of a person who listened and responded in a positive manner while at other times it was literally taking the student by the hand to be assured he made it to a scheduled interview. These students did not like to seek help from strangers because many were too proud and others did not know where assistance was available. As the students were introduced to various "helping" agencies and/or people by the coordinator, he learned what was available and what the procedures were to obtain the assistance.

The student who wanted to succeed would use the services that were available, but the student who had no desire to "go straight" would not seek or use assistance from anyone,

including the job coordinator. The job coordinator provided services for a "good start" for the student who wanted it, but 100% participation should not be expected.

Once the services were terminated, the student was on his own. In this study it was found that the students who developed positive relationships with family, employers, co-workers, or others continued to do well. They had a new "knight in shining armor" so that when the job coordinator left the scene, they still had their special someone to depend on. Those who depended entirely on the job coordinator and would not seek other friendships did not do as well. The student reacted as if he had been abandoned again and retaliated by doing something bad.

The group who received no assistance did not have the initial "good start" but yet there were students who did seek out on their own or had dependable people to help get them started. In both groups, much depended on the student himself whether he wanted to have a happy and successful life.

Recommendations

The study proved the coordinator provided a "good start" for students and reduced recidivism and, therefore, indicates a need for such services. These services could be provided by employing additional coordinators or by using a system that already exists. Each area educational agency employs a social

worker and through the cooperation of the State Training School, Department of Public Instruction, and each area education agency the social worker could become that "knight in shining armor." The assistance would be longer than 90 days and hopefully would give students more time to gain self-confidence and make more contacts with others before slowly weaned from the social worker.

Social and work skills should be continued at the State Training school with perhaps more emphasis on the social skills than what is presently given. These skills should be formally taught in a classroom situation and expected and reinforced at all settings--educational and clinical. Once the student leaves the institution, the coordinator/social worker should continue to reinforce these skills.

So, is the answer to reducing recidivism a coordinator, employment, school, social status, or family structure? A common denominator to all of these is people. Yes, people do need people. As a boy in the FECS project in New York City put it so simply, "It's nice to feel useful to somebody."

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APPENDIX

STUDENT EXIT FORM

Student's Name _____

Permanent Address _____

City State Zip

Vocational Program _____

Birth Date _____

Exit Date _____

Length of Stay _____

County of Placement _____

Placement Address _____

Telephone Number _____

I agree to participate in the survey. I understand I
will be asked to complete questionnaires and that all
responses will be confidential.

Signature_____
Date_____
Witnessed by_____
Date

Dear

As explained prior to your leaving the Training School, I am doing a research study on the role of the vocational job coordinator. This data will be used to help me complete my Master's degree at the University of Northern Iowa as well as inform the administration at the Training School the effectiveness of this position.

Within about two weeks you will receive a survey to fill out. The survey will ask for information relating to what you have done since you left the Training School.

The form should only take about five minutes to fill out and a self-addressed and stamped envelope will be enclosed for your convenience. If you have any questions about the study after you have returned the form, please feel free to write me.

Sincerely yours,

Sherry Caldwell

Dear

I am contacting you, along with other former students, to find out what you have done since leaving the Training School. This information will be used to help me complete my Master's degree program at the University of Northern Iowa and to evaluate the job coordinator position at the Training School.

Enclosed you will find a form to fill out. I sent you a letter about two weeks ago indicating I would be sending it. Whatever you say on the form will not be revealed to anyone in a way in which you can be identified. Please fill it out and return it to me as soon as possible. In fact, why not do it right now?

Please use the self-addressed and stamped envelope to return your completed survey. I want to thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Sherry Caldwell

Enclosure

Dear

Hello again! Responses to the first survey were great and I enjoyed hearing from you. As before, the data gathered is to help me complete my research paper and also inform the administration the effectiveness of the job coordinator position.

Within two weeks you will receive a survey to fill out. The survey will ask for information relating to what you have done since the last survey.

The form should only take about five minutes to fill out and a self-addressed and stamped envelope will be enclosed for your convenience. If you have any questions about the study after you have returned the form, please feel free to write me.

Sincerely yours,

Sherry Caldwell

Dear

This is the second set of survey forms--only one more to go! I am contacting you again to find out what you have done since the last survey. This information will be used to help me complete my Master's degree program at the University of Northern Iowa and to evaluate the job coordinator position at the Training School.

Enclosed you will find a form to fill out. I sent you a letter about two weeks ago indicating I would be sending it. Whatever you say on the form will not be revealed to anyone in a way in which you can be identified. Please fill it out and return it to me as soon as possible.

Please use the self-addressed and stamped envelope to return your completed survey. I want to again thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Sherry Caldwell

Enclosure

Dear

It's been awhile, but I am back! I'm still gathering information for my research paper and once again am asking for your assistance.

Within about two weeks you will receive the last survey to fill out. The survey will ask for information relating to what you have done since the last survey you received.

The form should only take a few minutes to fill out and a self-addressed and stamped envelope will be enclosed for your convenience. If you should have any questions about the study after you have returned the last form, please feel free to write me.

Sincerely yours,

Sherry Caldwell

Dear

This is the last survey you will receive. I want to thank you very much for giving me information so I can complete my Master's degree and also to let the administration know the effectiveness of the job coordinator position. Without your help I could not have been able to do either.

Enclosed you will find a form to fill out. I sent you a letter about two weeks ago indicating I would be sending it. Whatever you say on the form will not be revealed to anyone in a way in which you can be identified. Please fill it out and return it to me as soon as possible.

Please use the self-addressed and stamped envelope to return your completed survey. Once again, thanks alot for your assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Sherry Caldwell

Enclosure

SURVEY

ALL RESPONSES WHICH YOU GIVE WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY
CONFIDENTIAL

GENERAL DIRECTIONS: Please complete ALL sections that apply.
When you have completed the form, return
it in the self-addressed and stamped
envelope.

Check the answer that best applies to you.

1. What is your present employment?
 - ☐ Employed
 - ☐ Not Employed
 - ☐ Other
2. If you are not employed now, the reason is:
 - ☐ Can't find a job
 - ☐ Signed up for military
 - ☐ Attending college
 - ☐ Institutionalized
 - ☐ Other reason
3. What was your starting salary of your present job?
 - ☐ Less than \$3.35 per hour
 - ☐ \$3.36 - \$3.85
 - ☐ \$3.86 - \$4.35
 - ☐ \$4.36 - \$4.85
 - ☐ More than \$4.85

4. What is your present salary?

() Less than \$3.35 per hour

() \$3.36 - \$3.85

() \$3.86 - \$4.35

() \$4.36 - \$4.85

() More than \$4.85

5. Is your present job full time or part time?

() Full time (32 hours or more per week)

() Part time (less than 32 hours per week)

6. What is your job title _____

7. What are your job duties _____

